

Focus Active Fatherhood in Organizations

The Three Phases Model for Gender Analysis - Tailored Interventions

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Introduction

Within the EQUAL-partnership "Kareuz und Karriere" ("Parental Leave and Career", 2005 - 2007), a **research project on active fatherhood** is currently performed in Austrian companies. The primary objective for the project is to strengthen the **role of caring men in organizations**.

Research Objectives

- To identify institutional structures of active fatherhood in Austria (Scambor & Faßhauer, 2006)
- To analyse current perspectives, barriers and proactive trends for active fatherhood in companies

Sample

The gender analysis is performed in four organizations in Austria (bank; lending bank; care service; university).

Methods

- Interviews with experts ($n=12$)
- Interviews with men in caring roles ($n=10$)
- Analysis of personnel data
- Staff member survey

The project is carried out by

- Research Institute of Men's Counseling Center Graz (*gender analysis in organizations*)
- Austrian Kinderfreunde (*information campaign*)
- Unlimited Ideas (*staff member survey*)

Proactive trends towards active fatherhood are identified by using the **"Three Phases Model" of gender equality in organizations** (Holter, Riesenfeld & Scambor, 2005). This model was developed within the research project "Work Changes Gender" (Puchert, Gärtner & Höyng, 2005), and provides a perfect tool for the analysis of active fatherhood in relation to organizational gender equality processes (see table).

The Three Phases Model

Change Phase	Status Quo	Organizational Patterns and Processes	Active Fatherhood in the Three Phases Model
Early	Strong gender segregation (vertical, horizontal) Equality policy does not exist Traditional gender role expectations; gender typical work time distribution, occupations, fields	Company does not take notice of private context No institutionalized structures concerning family reconciliation Single, individualized solutions (informal level)	Costs for active fathers: work compression; subordination of caring men (under a hegemonic leadership) The "pioneers" are motivated by personal relational reasons; for them, <i>career</i> means <i>quality of life</i> , not <i>work</i>
Middle	Gender differences are evident Equality measures: positive actions for women First concrete measures regarding work-family-reconciliation (e.g. new forms of work)	Gender equality leads to gender competition Support of family reconciliation (focus on women) Positive actions for women lead to secondary effects for men (e.g. male parental leave)	Male parental leave is supported to foster women's chances; active support is regarded as necessary Caring men are not isolated cases anymore, but caring roles and leadership are still not compatible
Advanced	Effective support for increased gender equality Reconciliation policy exists Positive actions for women and men (reducing overwork culture; fostering caring role of men)	Gender perspective on organizational processes Men are addressed separately regarding gender equality measures Work as <i>completion</i> (work-life-balance)	Gender justice is established, male dominance is reduced, life chances of men are improved Strong involvement of men in family and care, equal work-life-balance

Information campaign

The results of the organization analyses provide the basis for an oncoming information campaign in selected companies to stimulate and support men to take an active caring role. The information material will be tailored for each company.

E.g. information for an organization in the *first phase* (a care service company) means to distribute posters and folders. Employees should be sensitized for the topic *male parental leave*. A core group of interested employees and multipliers should be installed to spread the topic among the staff members.

The respective information campaign for an organization in the *middle phase* (university with measures supporting active fatherhood and gender equality) includes the following items and activities:

- A guidebook for active fathers, containing a list of nearby child care facilities, in order to support time management requirements
- A *parents-day* should focus on employees' needs and sensitize for reconciliation topics

References

Further information about the EQUAL-project "Kareuz und Karriere" ("Parental Leave and Career"):
www.kareuzundkarriere.at

Further information about the research project "Work Changes Gender":
Puchert, R., Gärtner, M. & Höyng, S. (Eds.). (2005). *Work changes gender. Men and equality in the transition of labour forms*. Opladen: Barbara Budrich Publishers.
www.work-changes-gender.org

Holter, Ø. G., Riesenfeld, V. & Scambor, E. (2005). "We don't have anything like that here!" - Organisations, men and gender equality. In R. Puchert, M. Gärtner & S. Höyng (Eds.), *Work changes gender. Men and equality in the transition of labour forms* (pp. 73-104). Opladen: Barbara Budrich Publishers.

Scambor, E. & Faßhauer, M. (2006). *Strukturelle Rahmenbedingungen aktiver Vaterschaft. Fokus – Karenzregelungen und Teilzeit in Österreich*. [Structural conditions on active fatherhood. Focus - parental leave regulations and part time work in Austria]. Retrieved October 7, 2006, from http://www.maennerberatung.at/docs/forschung_strukturelleRahmenbedingungenAktiverVaterschaft.pdf



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